

THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE IN SUPPORTING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Idaho Early Years Conference '16
November 16, 2016

WELCOME!

- Ice Breaker Activity/Welcome Song....

just kidding!

OBJECTIVES:

- Discuss and gain understanding of developmentally appropriate social skills for children ages birth through eight years old.
- Build an awareness of how communication that dismisses or disapproves of child behavior fails to support—and can even harm—children's social emotional development.
- Gain understanding of a framework for supporting children with conflict resolution.
- Reflect on experiences and current practices in their early childhood classroom/profession.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

At the end of the workshop, participants should be able to:

- Identify immediate take-away strategies for communicating with children to build secure and positive teacher-child and child-child relationships.

WHY TALK ABOUT CONFLICT?

✓ Opportunity for learning in the early childhood classroom.

MESSAGE

TONE



(Photo: Center for Parent Information and Resources)

WORDS

MEANING

CHILDREN AND CONFLICT

What is Conflict?

- ✓ A challenge to the way a person thinks or behaves.
- ✓ May cause uneasiness, fear or a range of other strong emotions.



(Photo: www.mychildmagazine.com.au)

Consider times when children in your care have experienced conflict...what was it over?

CONFLICT HAPPENS

Conflict is a natural and daily occurrence. Children can experience conflict over:

- ✓ Toys
- ✓ Relationships
- ✓ Ideas
- ✓ Space
- ✓ Power
- ✓ Incomplete understanding



(Photo: www.scholastic.com)

WHAT DOES CHILD DEVELOPMENT TELL US ABOUT CONFLICT?



Developmental Perspective Chart (handout)



Child development knowledge assists adults to:

- ✓ *Teach through conflict* rather than just manage children's behavior.
- ✓ *Set reasonable expectations* for children's behavior.
- ✓ *See the value of conflict* as a way of enhancing development and supporting growth.



(Photo: www.verywell.com)

SELF REGULATION SKILLS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

- What is self-regulation? What is executive functioning?
 - "Executive function and self-regulation skills are the mental processes that enable us to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and juggle multiple tasks successfully."
 - "Children aren't born with these skills—they are born with the potential to develop them" (Harvard University Center on the Developing Child, 2016).
 - Air traffic control system



IMPORTANCE OF SELF-REGULATION

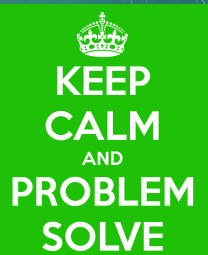
- Sensory processing
- Relationship with cognitive development (learning)
- Empathy
- Promoting "caring"
- Impact on future behaviors
(early childhood as both a critical and pivotal time)

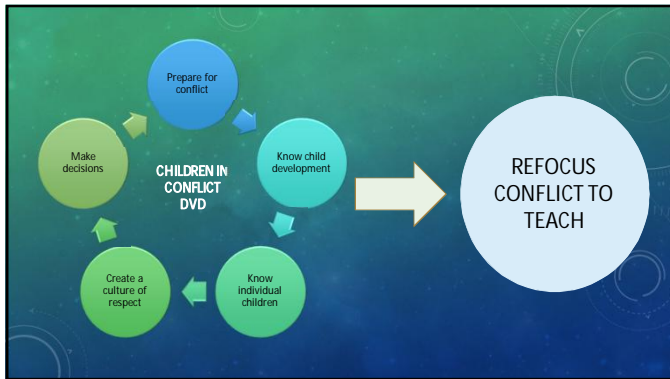


(Photo: www.careforkidsears.health.gov.au)

PERSPECTIVE: REFOCUS CONFLICT TO TEACH

- ✓ Learn that conflict/problems are naturally occurring, and happen every day.
- ✓ Know that problems can be solved.
- ✓ Understand that there is often more than one way to solve a problem.
- ✓ Help children know these things.





HOW CONFLICT AFFECTS CHILDREN

✓ Conflict can be a negative or positive force in children's learning.

✓ To be positive:

Ø Classroom conflict is kept at an optimal level

Ø Too much - over stimulating or withdrawn

Ø Too little - under challenging, boredom or complacency

✓ Classroom conflict is met with support from adults who facilitate peaceful conflict resolution.

COMMONLY USED LANGUAGE/DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES:

LANGUAGE/TONE OF VOICE/MESSAGE:

✓ A quick auto response of "Use your words".

✓ Insisting that children say "I'm sorry".

✓ Telling a child who is hurt/having big feelings, "You're okay".

✓ Referring to the children as "We...."

✓ An insistence for children to share.

✓ Telling children how to solve a problem.

ACTIONS

✓ Making a child give up a toy to a more insistent child.

✓ Sending a child in conflict away to another activity.

✓ Removing a sought after toy.

✓ Timeout/isolating.



NEW PERSPECTIVE: PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION (PCR)

- ✓ Working through a conflict/problem in a way that supports all children *physically, socially and emotionally*.
- ✓ PCR provides children with opportunities to feel *competent* in handling relationships and situations.
- ✓ PCR fosters feelings of self-respect and respect for others, as well as respect for new/different ideas.



(Photo: doccms.tcsedsystem.edu)

WHAT IS A TEACHER'S ROLE IN PCR?

- ✓ *Anticipate* that conflict will occur in group care and education settings
- ✓ *Respond* to children as conflict occurs naturally in classrooms
- ✓ *Support all children* in conflict with the intent to promote positive growth



(Photo: www.pbs.org)

PREPARE FOR CONFLICT

To prepare for conflict means being personally and professionally ready for children to disagree with each other at times throughout the day.

- ✓ **ACKNOWLEDGE** that some of the day will include child to child conflict.
- ✓ **BE INTENTIONAL** in your support of each child in a conflict situation.
- ✓ Know that conflict has educational and social **VALUE** in children's development.
- ✓ **REFLECT** on your feelings, knowledge and practice regarding conflict in your classroom.
- ✓ **BE OPEN** to learning about PCR.

CLASSROOM SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT KNOWING EACH CHILD

- Observing children!
- Communication with parents
- Being on the children's physical level, making eye contact, using children's names, smiling, physical affection
- Having broad rules that can be applied to specific situations
- Applying differential teaching responses based on the individual child
 - the amount and type of support depends on the age of the child, her experience with conflict resolution, skill level, temperament, and current family situation

HOW LANGUAGE CONTRIBUTES TO A CULTURE OF RESPECT

The language we use with children is key to creating a respectful space.

- Praise vs. Encouragement
- Descriptive Language
- Anticipatory Language
- I Wish/You Wish
- Open Ended Questions



(Photo: www.gfhbooks.com)

PROCESS GUIDE: SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN

- Whenever possible, first attend to the child who has been hurt.
- Check in with her and make sure she is okay, safe.
- Help the child who hurt to a, "What can I do to make you feel better?" directly to the child who has been hurt.
 - Adult may need to speak for the child.
- Help the child who hurt do what the other child needs.
- Have the child who hurt make sure the child who has been hurt, is okay.
 - "Are you okay"?

TAKEAWAY STRATEGIES: SET THE TONE

- View children as capable, caring individuals
- Team work = effective teaching
- Clarify roles / Be consistent with approach and language
- Have a consistent, predictable, and flexible routine
- Be purposeful about transitions – i.e. arrival times
- Create intentional learning areas and activities—invite children to engage with materials and peers
- Check in
 - With yourself, with your co-teacher, with children and families
 - Children and Conflict Resolution Classroom Assessment



(Photo: www.business2community.com)

Think of your classroom "tone" as a thermostat—set it at the temperature that is comfortable for everyone.

I WENT TO A WORKSHOP AND THIS WHAT I LEARNED....



On the words you use, the meaning and message of what you say, and the tone of your voice when you communicate with children!

A TEACHER'S RESOLUTION

- ✓ Today there will be conflict.
- ✓ I will have many opportunities to be humane, supportive and compassionate.
- ✓ I will consider each individual child.
- ✓ I will consider child development.
- ✓ I will take my decision making responsibility seriously.
- ✓ I will make decisions that reflect who I want to be as a teacher.
- ✓ Today I will teach.

FINAL THOUGHTS? QUESTIONS?



KEEP
CALM
AND
ASK
FOR HELP

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